

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-07 SAI-01 SAM-01

OMB-01 /076 W

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O R 201513Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5389

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3050

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: POLITICAL TIMETABLE - REFERENDUM IN JUNE?

1. A SENIOR SOURCE IN THE PRIME MINISTRY TELLS US THAT THE THINKING HAS MOVED ORWARD ON THE REFERENDUM QUESTION. IN CONTRAST TO THE OCTOBER DATE FOR A REFERENDUM THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND FRAGA HAD TALKED ABOUT AS LATE AS LAST WEEK, THEY ARE NOW THINKING THAT ARIAS WOULD ANNOUNCE A JUNE REFERENDUM IN HIS END OF APRIL SPEECH TO LAY OUT THE COURSE OF REFORM. IF THIS THINKING HOLDS, IT WOULD MEAN THAT THE VIEWS OF  
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AREILZA AND OTHER LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE THAT THE EARLIER A REFER-

ENDUM THE BETTER,HAVE PREVAILED. WHILE THE CONTENT IS CRUCIAL,  
IF WE ASSUME A DECENTLY WORDED PROPOSAL ON THE SHAPE OF  
THE NEW PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM, THEN WE WOULD JUDGE THE  
ACCELERATION OF THE REFERENDUM A WISE RESPONSE.

2. THE REMAINDER OF THE ELECTORAL TIMETABLE WOULD FOLLOW  
THE LINES OF OUR MOST RECENT REPORTING, THAT IS, GENERAL  
ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW PARLIAMENT IN THE FALL, SAY,  
OCTOBER OR NOVEMBER, FOLLOWED BY MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS LATER  
IN THE YEAR OR THE FIRST OF 1977. THIS IS, OF COURSE, A  
REVERSAL AND SPEEDING UP OF THE ORIGINAL TIMETABLE, WHICH  
HAD MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS FIRST, IN THE FALL, AND PARLIA-  
MENTARY ELECTIONS IN THE SPRING OF NEXT YEAR. THIS  
REVERSAL OF THE ORDER OF THE ELECTIONS, UPON WHICH EVERYONE  
AGREES, IS BASED ON THE SOUND REASONING THAT MUNICIPAL  
ELECTIONS, IN WHICH LOCAL ISSUES AND POWER BROKERING  
WOULD PLAY A CONSIDERABLE ROLE, COULD DISTORT THE NATIONAL  
POLITICAL PROCESS IF THEY PRECEDED NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

3. INTERESTINGLY, A LEADING SPANISH JOURNALIST TOLD US  
LAST NIGHT THAT HE HAD CONVERSED ABOUT A WEEK AGO WITH  
SANTIAGO CARRILLO IN PARIS AND THAT CARRILLO HAD INDICATED  
THAT HE WAS NOT INCLINED TO GO ALL OUT AGAINST A REFERENDUM,  
THOUGH THE PCE'S ATTITUDE WOULD BE CONDITIONED IN  
CONSIDERABLE DEGREE ON THE QUESTION OF LEGALIZATION OF THE  
PARTY. WE FIND IN THAT REMARK A CONFIRMATION OF OUR  
ANALYSIS THAT A PROPERLY CONCEIVED REFERENDUM WOULD  
COMMAND GREAT SUPPORT AMONG THE SPANISH ELECTORATE. IF  
THAT IS THE CASE, THE PCE WOULD HAVE MUCH TO LOSE IF IT  
WERE TO ATTEMPT AN ALL-OUT ABSTENTIONIST CAMPAIGN AGAINST  
THE REFERENDUM, A FACTOR THAT WOULD SEEM TO ACCOUNT FOR  
CARRILLO'S EXPRESSED RELUCTANCE TO ENGAGE THE PCE'S PRESTIGE  
IN AN ANTI-REFERENDUM EFFORT.

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## Message Attributes

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